

Amendments to the Claims:

1 – 15 (Canceled)

16. (Currently amended) ~~The I/C chip as defined in claim 15~~ An I/C chip

suitable for wire bonding comprising:

at least one conductive bond pad;

at least one layer of dielectric material overlying said conductive bond pad;

a surface defining an opening in said layer of dielectric material exposing said conductive bond pad; and

a conductive seed layer disposed in said opening overlying said conductive bond pad and in contact therewith and in contact with the entire surface of said opening and having at least one exposed edge;

two layers of Ni and Au plated on said conductive seed layer in said opening wherein the an intermediate conductive layer is of TaN/Ta is provided between said conductive seed layer and said conductive bond pad.

17. (Currently amended) The I/C chip as defined in claim ~~11~~ 16 wherein the conductive bond pad in the I/C chip is Al.

18. (Currently amended) The I/C chip as defined in claim ~~11~~ 16 wherein said at least one layer of conductive material defines a wall in said I/C chip in which is wholly disposed a ball bond and wire.

19. (Currently amended) The I/C chip as defined in claim ~~18~~ 16 wherein the ball bond is Au.